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Keywords: Old English, Anglo-Latin, communities of practice, critical discourse studies, outgroup

1 Introduction[1]

Among the outgroups of the Old English period, those associated with the Vikings play the most prominent role in the sources until the later part of the eleventh century. From the Alfredian period onwards (871–899), this ethnic group becomes the most potent threat both to the West Saxon kingship and to the English identities of the writers affiliated with it. Half a dozen scholars[2] are engaged

1 I wish to thank Annina Seiler Rübekeil, Matti Kilpiö, the editors of *JHSL* and two anonymous reviewers for their valuable comments and suggestions.

2 Asser, bishop of Sherborne (d. 909), Plegemund, archbishop of Canterbury (d. 914), John the Old Saxon (fl.c. 885–904), and Grimbald of St Bertin (d. 901); Werferth (d. 907x915), bishop of Worcester, and the priests Æthelstan and Werwulf also have some association with the group, as witnessed by Asser's *Life of King Alfred*.

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by King Alfred to initiate and realise a programme for the revival of learning, to take part in the administration of the Church and in issuing Alfred's law code and charters. Education and Christian revival thus become as important as military response to the Vikings, shaping the cultural identity of the Anglo-Saxon elite and its juxtaposition to other political and cultural players of the period. In the chronicles, the members of the Alfredian circle develop distinct exclusion discourse strategies to mark the Scandinavian outgroup in a number of (mostly derogatory) ways. These strategies change over time, depending on the political situation and relations with the outgroup, and adjust to the evolving (re)construction of the ingroup identity. Just how and why these changes take place and what discourse strategies they involve is the focus of the present article. Below, I first provide a brief historical outline of the events leading up to the construction of the Viking outgroup and introduce my data. I then proceed to a description of available Old English and Anglo-Latin labels for the Vikings and analyse them in terms of critical discourse studies, relating them to other discourse strategies involved in the linguistic construction of in- and outgroups. My aim is to see how early medieval political changes are reflected in the language at the level of discourse. Methodologically, this paper builds upon my recent research into outgroup construction and bilingual communities of practice in Anglo-Saxon England, which does not discriminate between Latin and English texts of the period but treats them together as constituting a bilingual Old English–Anglo-Latin continuum of discourse practices that coexist and shape each other within the same communicative system (Timofeeva 2013a, 2013b, forthcoming). Therefore, both Old English and Latin texts are included in my corpus for this study.

Community of practice (CoP) is a fairly recent concept, borrowed by linguists from cognitive anthropology. It applies to groups of people who share a task or profession and get together regularly in face-to-face interaction. As they work and incorporate new members, communities of practice create and define meaningful plans and goals to carry on their common enterprise and, in doing so, invent and ritualise a repertoire of practices (both verbal and non-verbal) (Wenger 1998: 72–85). As I have argued in Timofeeva (2013b), this concept can be useful for our understanding of both Anglo-Saxon monastic communities and even a larger social group, such as the Anglo-Saxon clergy. In addition to non-verbal elements (routines, tools, artefacts), the verbal practices of any ecclesiastical community would include all levels of language as well as related strategies for, e. g. delivering a sermon, writing a letter to one's bishop, or using certain pigments for illuminations and certain scripts for different portions of a manuscript (Timofeeva 2013b: 203–204). Some of the practices may vary from one monastery to another; others may be the same for the whole of Britain or even Europe.

In this article, it is appropriate to concentrate on the smaller type of CoPs. One in particular – the Alfredian community of practice – is relevant, especially in the light of Nicholas Brooks's hypothesis (2010) about the central role of the royal household in the dissemination of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (one of the Alfredian projects) between the 890s and 1130s.[3] This CoP comes into being in the aftermath of the Viking attacks in the 870s, when the royal court at Winchester becomes an intellectual centre to enhance and promote an 'English' identity and its political and cultural objectives. Although its members are mostly clerical (see fn. 1), their agenda also has secular goals: to educate the aristocracy, to provide the West Saxon kingship with legal and historical texts. Brooks suggests that regular annalistic record goes on at the court, most likely at the royal chapel, whence instalments of annals continue to be sent to prominent monasteries after the 890s to update their respective copies of the *Chronicle*, which would imply a continuity of linguistic practices across several generations of annalists. If we adopt central dissemination as a probable scenario, time must remain a prominent variable in the analysis of the data. It is, therefore, important to check whether, or how much, communities of practice are able to pass on and maintain their linguistic repertoires over time.

Because historical writings of the Alfredian CoP are in many ways a response to the major political threat of the time (discussed in more detail below), they display features typical for a community trying to defend its ethnicity by defining and redefining both itself and the challenging outgroup. In this article, I am, therefore, primarily interested in how the dominant (Anglo-Saxon) group describes the non-dominant (Scandinavian) group in terms of topics and narratives (the kind of events and characteristics that receive prominence in the sources), local semantics (implications, presuppositions), style (syntax, choice of words), argumentation that attributes negative characteristics to outgroups, and in how social power is reproduced in discourse in general (van Dijk et al. [see Dijk et al.] 1997; van Dijk [see Dijk] 2008). I thus suggest that critical discourse analysis (CDA) can be used advantageously for our understanding of medieval data, which seems to be in line with several recent applications of CDA to historical texts, e. g. Johanna Wood's study of late Middle English letters by Margaret Paston (2004), Sheryl Prentice and Andrew Hardie's work (2009) on London press reporting the Glencairn Uprising of 1653–1654, and Nicci MacLeod and Barbara Fennell's

3 Brooks's approach challenges the established view, which traces the so-called 'common stock' material in all the surviving manuscripts of the *Chronicle* only as far as *c.* 892, with subsequent continuations being produced locally by the respective monasteries.

analysis (2012) of Early Modern English documents comprising the so-called 1641 Depositions, i. e. testimonies of the 1641 Irish uprising. To the best of my knowledge, no attempts have been made to extend CDA approaches to the Old English period.

My analysis is based on the methodology developed by Wodak et al. (2009) for the study of national identity,[4] and, in particular, on their macro-strategies of identity construction (i. e. complexes of discursive strategies and means of their realisation that work together, e. g. to establish a certain identity or to justify the actions of the ingroup). As I have recently argued, two of these can be applied to the construction of the outgroup in this Anglo-Saxon setting (Timofeeva forthcoming):

1. Strategies of justification and relativisation "are employed primarily in relation to problematical actions or events in the past… They attempt to justify or relativise a societal *status quo ante* by emphasising the legitimacy of past acts of the 'own' national 'we'-group";
2. Strategies of perpetuation "attempt to maintain and reproduce a threatened national identity, i. e. to preserve, support and protect it" (Wodak et al. 2009: 31–42).

On the micro-level, these strategies are further served by various other strategies, most commonly *strategies of assimilation* (those that emphasise or presuppose sameness) and *strategies of dissimilation* (those that emphasise or presuppose difference), both of which are realised in argumentation schemes (topoi and fallacies) and means of realisation (lexical units, syntactic constructions, metaphors, metonymy, euphemisms, comparisons, quotations, and many other rhetorical devices). Because this study concentrates on the discursive construction of outgroups, the micro-strategies that are most frequently evoked are those of dissimilation. In terms of means and forms of realisation, I focus mostly on personal reference (anthroponymic generic terms, or labels[5]) and on argumentation schemes about outgroups involved in settlement conflicts.

4 This is not exactly to suggest that we are dealing with "national identity" or "nation" in the Anglo-Saxon period; this is why the term "ethnicity" is preferred throughout this article. Several scholars have argued, however, that the sense of ethnic belongingness in English historical texts from the time of Alfred onwards is so strong that a kind of "national identity" was present in Britain at quite an early stage (e.g. Wormald 1994; Foot 1996, 2005). In his *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Anthony Smith holds that an ethnic identity of one sort or another always precedes national identity and nationalism of modern states.

5 Labels are also central in Prentice and Hardie's study (2009).

2 Historical background of Viking Age England

This section provides a brief summary of the historical events of the Viking Age in England, whose purpose is to highlight the key dates and chronology of the early raids, the eventual settlement, the later raids, and the short life of Cnut's empire (for more detailed accounts, see for instance Stenton 1971; Sawyer 1971; Coupland 1995; Richards 2000). These episodes alone provide us with a basic periodization of the Viking Age in England. To give them a more precise dimension, I distinguish between four periods of Viking activity in Anglo-Saxon England of about a hundred years' duration each and, therefore, four phases in historical writings about the Vikings[6]:

Phase 1: Sporadic raids and looting, early colonisation, 789–896 (covering most of the First Viking Age: the period of the initial Viking offensive, spanning from the first recorded raid to early colonisation and the division of land between King Alfred and the Danish leader Guthrum);

Phase 2: Permanent colonisation, West Saxon re-conquest, 897–979 (the period of permanent Scandinavian colonisation and intermittent English offensives, extending West Saxon control to East Anglia and the north);

Phase 3: Later raids, extortion of tribute, and political conquest, 980–1066 (covering the Second Viking Age: the second wave of Viking raids, culminating in the conquest of Swein and succession of Cnut, and concluding with the Battle of Stamford Bridge and the Norman Conquest);

Phase 4: The end of the Viking Age and political reassessment, post 1066 (the period of retrospective writing and re-evaluation of the past events in terms of their significance for the new political situation).

These historical stages have very close parallels in the manuscript history of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Thus, the coverage of Phase 1 corresponds roughly to the 'Chronicle of Alfred,' Phase 2 to the tenth-century continuation, and

6 More details on the events of the respective phases are supplied below. Richards, whose periodization I use as a basis, also has four (albeit different) phases (2000: 20–40):

Phase 1: Sporadic raids and looting, 789–864;

Phase 2: Permanent colonisation, 865–896;

Phase 3: Extortion of tribute, 980–1012;

Phase 4: Political conquest, 1013–1066.

For my purposes, I merged Richards' Phases 1 and 2 (into Phase 1) and Phases 3 and 4 (into Phase 3), and added my own Phases 2 and 4.

Phase 3 to the 'Chronicle of Æthelred and Cnut' (cf. Dumville 2008: 353), which may imply not only a change of historical circumstance but also a change of or within communities of practice. By applying the four stages to the analysis, I show that they are also meaningful in linguistic terms, in that they mark important changes in discourse strategies.

The earliest datable Viking landing in England took place in 789, when three ships of Northmen arrived at Portland on the Dorset coast in Wessex (Sawyer 1971: 17–18; Richards 2000: 20–21). To quote the *ASC* on this raid:

> In this year King Brihtric married Offa's daughter Eadburh. And in his days there came for the first time three ships of Northmen [from Hörthaland according to some versions] and then the reeve rode to them and wished to force them to the king's residence, for he did not know what they were; and they slew him. Those were the first ships of Danish men that came to the land of the English (trans. Sawyer 1971: 17–18).[7]

In 793, the monastery of Lindisfarne was sacked amid mysterious fiery omens in the sky. Other attacks of the 790s-800s were notably sporadic and should probably be seen "in the context of the Norse colonisation of Shetland, Orkney and the Hebrides" (Richards 2000: 23; cf. Sawyer 1971: 1–2). It was only in the 830-40s that England began to be troubled by the raiders in earnest, when Danish attacks spread to the coastal territories of Wessex, Kent and Cornwall. In the winter of 850–851, the Vikings took their first winter quarters on the (then) Isle of Thanet. From this point on, the raids spread inland, escalating further in the 860s (in East Anglia, Mercia, and Northumbria). The year 865 marks the arrival of the 'Great Army' that stays for several years, harassing and plundering the lands on both sides of the Channel.

In the early 870s, heavy fighting rages in Mercia and Wessex, and by the end of this decade several important changes in the nature of Viking activity begin to emerge – they not only stay longer, but the size of their war-bands increases as well and there are more armies on campaign that engage in distant across-country expeditions and exploit local feuds to military ends. Most crucially, their aim now is to settle permanently in England, with the first

7 Keynes says that "the earliest raids originated in Norway but the 'Danes' were also involved" (1997: 51). At the same time, it has been observed that the destination of the first raid – the southern coast of Wessex – was rather unusual, for the Viking attacks in the 790s and early 800s were directed mostly to the eastern coast – to Northumbria, Mercia, East Anglia and Essex. For Dumville, this entry is an important statement of the Alfredian chroniclers that "the Viking Age in England began in Wessex," while the point of origin of the Vikings was unknown and irrelevant (Dumville 2008: 356). See my discussion of the original Old English text of the annal in example 4 and footnote 13.

partitions of land between the Danes and the English taking place in Northumbria (876), Mercia (877), and East Anglia (880) (Coupland 1995: 194–197; Richards 2000: 27–29). The battle of Edington fought by King Alfred in 878 has a decisive and stabilising effect for several decades. The treaty of Wedmore signed in 886 establishes a boundary between the lands controlled by Alfred's Wessex and the Danish leader Guthrum's East Anglia, determining the line that is later to mark the division into the areas governed according to Danelaw and Anglo-Saxon law (Richards 2000: 29). Even though internal conflicts and further Viking attacks from outside continue, the second half of the ninth century is a milestone that distinguishes the period of plunder from the period of permanent settlement, and thus also prepares a conceptual divide between Viking raiders of the earlier period and Danish settlers of the latter.

In the tenth century, West Saxon grasp over Britain is strengthened, with Alfred's children and grandchildren regaining control over the Danelaw in the 910s, subjugating the Northumbrians and Scots in the 920s, crushing Danish power in the north in 937 (the Battle of Brunanburh), and expelling Erik Bloodaxe from York in 954 (Richards 2000: 29). The expulsion of the settled and partly Christianised Danes, however, never takes place, and a mixed Anglo-Scandinavian society continues to co-exist in the Danelaw more or less peacefully for several decades, until new generations of raiders start to arrive from Norway, Denmark and Sweden from 980 onwards (Sawyer 1971: 4, 22; Townend 2002: 2–3). The intensity of these attacks launched from both Scandinavia and Ireland (including those from the Isle of Man), coupled with the political weakness of King Edgar's two sons – Edward and Æthelred – has a devastating effect on English defences, whose means are far more often Danegeld payments than military actions (Richards 2000: 34–35; Keynes 2007: 152–159). In spite of several desperate reprisals and counterattacks, English efforts overall prove largely ineffective against Scandinavian armies. When Swein of Denmark comes to England in 1013, Æthelred has to flee to Normandy.

Upon the death of Æthelred and his son Edmund in 1016, Swein's son Cnut is accepted by the English as their king, eventually extending his empire to include Denmark, Norway, and parts of Sweden (Sawyer 1971: 4; Richards 2000: 39–40). The West Saxon dynasty is only restored to England in 1042, with the return of Edward, Æthelred's seventh son, from Normandy. Although the kings of both Norway and Denmark claim to be Edward's heirs when he dies in 1066, it is a descendant of another Scandinavian line, reaching all the way back to Rollo of Normandy, who, in the same year, establishes himself as king of England and ultimately brings the Viking Age in England to its conclusion a few years later.

3 Data and method

The data that I use in this study is sourced from historical writings spanning some three hundred years (from the late ninth to the mid twelfth century) and covering the events from the earliest Scandinavian raids on Britain in the late eighth century up to the spread of Norman rule in the late eleventh and the takeover of the Agenvins in the mid twelfth century. The sources are divided into the four phases described above and include:

Phase 1: The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (*ASC*), MS A; Asser's *Life of King Alfred* (texts produced by the Alfredian CoP);
Phase 2: *ASC*, MSS A and B; *The Chronicle of Æthelweard*;
Phase 3: *ASC*, MSS C and E;
Phase 4: *ASC*, MS E; *The Chronicle of John of Worcester* (completed c.1140); Symeon of Durham's *Historia Regum* (c.1140); Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum* (c.1155).

All the Anglo-Latin works are considered to be contemporary with the phases they describe, even though their manuscripts may have been produced later. The portions of the *ASC* are either roughly contemporary (e. g. written towards the end of the respective phase, like MS A in late Phase 1, MS B in late Phase 2, or MS C in late Phase 3) or post-factum copies based on earlier contemporary exemplars (e. g. MS E as source for Phase 3). Two copies of the *ASC* for Phases 2 and 3 were consulted to control for possible dialectal or non-Winchester biased discourse practices. This was impossible for Phase 1, for which MS A is the only surviving contemporary copy, and largely irrelevant for Phase 4, in which the Viking Age becomes part of bygone history.[8]

My data were extracted by a combination of close reading and searches in electronic corpora (DOEC and MLASS). The analysis of outgroup labels includes a quantitative approach (mostly in terms of relative frequencies) and, therefore, allows for more precision in observing changes of discourse strategies over time, with CDA being applied throughout as a qualitative

8 As will be shown below, new strategies and rhetoric evolve in the Anglo-Latin sources of Phase 4, while scribes who continue the Old English tradition are mostly content with copying and compiling from old sources. For Phase 4 selected parts of the sources were studied, covering the events from the first Viking raid until shortly after the Norman Conquest.

frame. My method can thus be summarised as corpus-assisted CDA (cf. MacLeod and Fennell 2012: 265).

4 Analysis of the chronicles

As discussed briefly in Section 2, during the 300 years of Viking raids and migration – from the first landing at Portland to the establishment of the Norman rule in England in the 1070s – the fortunes of the English and Scandinavians change several times. I will now argue that these fluctuations in military success and political dominance are reflected in the rhetoric of the sources surviving from the Viking Age.

No contemporary accounts of the earliest raids exist, although they may once have been extant (cf. Sawyer 1971: 17–18). The heavy news spreads quickly, however: in the summer of 793, Alcuin (having by then returned to the court of Charlemagne after a few years sojourn in Northumbria) has already been informed about the Viking attack on Lindisfarne on 8 June the same year by one (or several) of his English correspondents. His emotional reaction to these events is known from a series of letters addressed to the monastic communities of Lindisfarne, Wearmouth and Jarrow, to King Ethelred of Northumbria, and from the elegy on "The destruction of Lindisfarne". Rich in rhetorical admonition and doom-laden warning, his letters are an important discourse precedent, which introduces and elaborates two topoi that became influential with later writers: bloodthirsty pagans and God's punishment of bad Christians. The first one is best exemplified with the famous quotation from Alcuin's letter to Ethelred:

(1) Ecce trecentis et quinquaginta ferme annis quod nos nostrique patres hujus pulcherrimæ patriæ incolæ fuimus, et nunquam talis terror prius apparuit in Bretannia veluti modo a pagana gente perpessi sumus, nec ejusmodi naufragium fieri posse putabatur. Ecce ecclesia Sancti Cuthbercti sacerdotum Dei sanguine aspersa, omnibus spoliata ornamentis, locus cunctis in Britannia venerabilior paganis gentibus datur ad deprædandum… (Haddan and Stubbs 1871: iii, 493)
'Lo, it is nearly 350 years that we and our fathers have inhabited this most lovely land, and never before has such terror appeared in Britain as we have now suffered from a pagan race, nor was it thought that such an

> inroad from the sea could be made. Behold, the church of St Cuthbert spattered with the blood of the priests of God, despoiled of all its ornaments; a place more venerable than all in Britain is given as a prey to pagan peoples.' (trans. Whitelock 1979: 842)[9]

This passage is clearly not meant to chronicle the raid (although, significantly, Alcuin notes that the retribution of blood comes from the north [*a borealibus pœnas sanguinis venire super populum*]), but rather to foreground his main idea: since times immemorial, kingdoms and countries were lost for the sins of their rulers and peoples. The sins of the Northumbrians are many – fornication and incest, avarice, robbery, and violent judgements, luxury in clothing and food, neglect of alms-giving and disobedience towards the priests – and unless they repent and mend their ways, divine wrath will not spare their country (cf. Coupland 1991 on a similar reasoning among Carolingian writers).

Alcuin's letters to Bishop Higbald and the monks of Lindisfarne and to the brothers of Wearmouth and Jarrow are equally full of lamentation, warning, and reproach to those of them who indulge in earthly riches and pleasures. The notion of the Viking attacks as God's judgment will be echoed by the Saxon writers in the south once the Viking attacks spread to Wessex; later on, several chroniclers will present the same explanation for the Norman Conquest. Whether or not Alcuin was their direct source is not that relevant, even though the letter may have been known to Ælfric around 1000 and is cited by William of Malmesbury around 1125 (Whitelock 1979: 842). The Old Testament, as

9 Cf. also the elegy on "The destruction of Lindisfarne" (ll. 194–200):

> Omnibus, heu, quam sit illa dolenda dies,
> Qua pagana manus, veniens a finibus orbis,
> Navigio subito litora nostra petit
> Expoliansque partum veneranda sepulcra decore,
> Necnon foedavit templa dicata dei
> Atque dei Christi mundissima vinea Sorech
> Vulpinis subito dentibus esca fuit,

'[H]ow painful to everyone was that day when, alas,/a pagan warband arrived from the ends of the earth,/descended suddenly by ship and came to our land,/despoiling our fathers' venerable tombs of their finery/and befouling the temples dedicated to God,/and Sorech, the most pure vine of the divine Christ,/was suddenly gnawed by the teeth of foxes' (trans. Godman 1985: 137).

Alcuin himself notes,[10] Roman history, chapters in Gildas' *De excidio*, and Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica* provide plenty of parallels for the Northumbrian situation, and what really matters is that this train of thought – namely, that the sinful behaviour of peoples and/or rulers results in their destruction by a (pagan) enemy – is available and re-emerges continuously from the earliest raids until the end of the Viking period and beyond. Because Alcuin's goal is, above all, to admonish and warn his countrymen, the pagans themselves play only a secondary role in his letters, their attributes being schematic and unspecific. It is important, however, that in spite of this vagueness in the description of the outgroup, the threat that they stand for targets one of the foundations of the Anglo-Saxon institutionalised power – the Church. Indeed, if the Church and St Cuthbert cannot save the Northumbrians, nobody can, because the latter are destroying the Church from within, they have become like pagans themselves in their luxurious and sinful ways. Thus only by re-establishing their own Christian identity can they hope to combat the menacing outgroup. In Alfredian texts another aspect of the threat comes to the fore. The outgroup is construed not only as pagan but, overwhelmingly, as one living with utter disregard for civilised law and, thus, threatening the law itself, the Anglo-Saxon institutions that personify the law, and, in essence, the lawfulness of the Anglo-Saxon presence in the territory that they occupy.

4.1 Phase 1

4.1.1 Nomenclature of labels

Two texts from the Alfredian period are relevant for the analysis of Phase 1: the late ninth-century portions of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (*ASC*) MS A and Asser's *Life of King Alfred*, whose account of the historical situation of King Alfred's reign derives from a now lost version of the *ASC* (Stevenson 1959: lxxxv–lxxxviii; Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 55). Absolute and relative numbers of all references to the Vikings in the *ASC* MS A are given in Table 1 and in Asser's *Life* in Table 2.

10 "Whoever reads the Holy Scriptures and ponders ancient histories and considers the fortune of the world will find that for sins of this kind kings lost kingdoms and peoples their country; and while the strong unjustly seized the goods of others, they justly lost their own" (trans. Whitelock in *EHD* 1979: 843).

Table 1: Labelling the Vikings in *ASC* MS A (Phase 1)[a].

	N	%
se here 'the band, army'	82	62
þa Deniscan, *Denisc here* 'the Danish (army)'	20	15
sciphere, *scipu*, etc. 'fleet'	12	9
hæþen(e) men/*here* 'the heathen men/army'	9	7
Wicingas, *hergas* 'the pirates, plunderers'	5	4
other	4	3
Total	132	100

[a]I have only included nominal labels in the count. Although the pronominal 'they' label also occurs in the data, at about the same frequency as *se here*, it refers indiscriminately to both the Scandinavian outgroup, the ingroup, as well as to other outgroups. Interestingly, the ingroup is never construed in terms of first person pronouns. Whenever 'we' occurs in the sample, it is used as a collective 'we' of the narrator in parenthetical clauses.

Remarkably, the ethnicity of the enemy – *þa Deniscan* 'the Danish' or *Denisc here* 'Danish army' – is only evoked in 15 per cent of the occurrences. The overwhelming majority of references are not explicit on this point; rather, they refer to the military force of the Vikings by using *se here* 'the band' or *sciphere*, *scipu*, etc. 'the ship-band, ships' or to their paganism by using *hæþen(e) men*/*here* 'heathen men/army'.[11] Another 4 per cent of the references are to *Wicingas* or *hergas* 'pirates, plunderers', which should best be grouped together with *se here* (see below).

Table 2: Labelling the Vikings in Asser's *Life of King Alfred*.

	N	%
pagani 'the pagans'	61	52
paganorum exercitus 'the army of the pagans'	26	22
(DEM) *exercitus* '(the) army'	20	17
hostes/*inimici* 'the enemies'	7	6
other	4	3
Total	118	100

A similar pattern emerges in Asser's *Life*, although this time the enemy lacks an ethnic dimension altogether. Half of the references are instead to the 'pagans' (*pagani*), 17 per cent to the 'army' (*exercitus*), and 22 per cent are a combination of

11 For a detailed account of the evolution of the semantic category MISBELIEVERS, see Kirner-Ludwig (2015).

both – *paganorum exercitus* 'the army of the pagans'. A small portion of the corpus – 6 per cent of the references – have no explicit parallels in the Old English source; these are the instances in which the Vikings are referred to as *hostes* or *inimici* ('enemies').

The difference between the two early sources can, on the one hand, be explained by the differences in genre and in the audience expectations of the authors. Asser's use of Latin restricts his audience to the clergy. He is not just documenting events but primarily writing a life of a Christian king, whose struggle against the Vikings is, essentially, that between good and evil (cf. Dumville 2008: 355).[12] This contention can be supported by a comparison of the two texts:

(2) Her Ceorl aldormon gefeaht wiþ **hæþene men** mid Defenascire æt Wicganbeorge, & þær micel wæl geslogon, & sige namon… Þy ilcan geare Æthelstan cyning, & Ealchere dux micelne **here** ofslogon æt Sondwic on Cent (ChronA 851)
'In this year ealdorman Ceorl and [the men of] Devonshire fought against the heathens at Wemburg, and slew many of them, and took victory… The same year, King Athelstan and Ealdorman Ealhere slew a large force at Sandwich in Kent'

(3) Ceorl, Domnaniae comes, cum Domnaniis contra **paganos** pugnavit in loco, qui dicitur Uuicganbeorg, et Christiani victoriam habuerunt… Eodem quoque anno Æthelstan, et Ealhere comes magnum **paganorum exercitum** in Cantia, in loco, qui dicitur Sandwic, occiderunt (Asser 3–6)
'Ceorl, the ealdorman of Devonshire, and the men of Devon fought against the heathens in a place called Wemburg, and the Christians had victory… The same year, Athelstan and Ealdorman Ealhere slew a large pagan force in Kent, in a place called Sandwich.'

Asser not only specifies that the large force at Sandwich was a pagan force, but he also makes it clear that the victory at Wemburg was a Christian victory.

On the other hand, the higher number of 'pagans' in Asser is also due to the semantic differences between Old English *here* and Latin *exercitus*. While the

12 Asser's Welsh origin and the amount of detail he devotes to the geography of Wessex and other English lands in his *Life* (etymologies, explanations, translations into Welsh) suggest that the work was written with a Welsh audience in mind. By the time of his writing in 893, all the rulers of the Welsh had recognised King Alfred as their overlord; therefore, Asser's aim may have been to present the king as a "benevolent protector" by praising his personal qualities and military achievements (Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 41–42, 56–57; Lavelle 2010: 24–25).

Latin lexeme is neutral and can be applied to the armies and forces on both sides of a conflict, the Old English lexeme is used almost exclusively for alien, hostile armies, those of the 'Vikings' or 'pagans' (BT s.v. *here*; Swanton 1996: xxxiii–xxxiv; also see below). Therefore, to capture the full meaning of the Old English *here*, Asser had to come up with a suitable equivalent. Table 3 lists 60 instances in which direct correspondences between the *ASC* MS A and Asser's translation can be established.

Table 3: Asser's translation equivalents.

ASC MS A	Asser	N	%
se here	*exercitus paganorum*	20	33
se here	*pagani*	14	23
se here	(DEM) *exercitus*	14	23
hæþene men	*pagani*	7	12
þa Deniscan	*pagani*	5	8
Total		60	100

Interestingly, only roughly a quarter of these instances are formal equivalents – *exercitus* with or without a demonstrative or, even more commonly, *exercitus* preceded by *praedictus* or *praefatus* 'aforesaid'. More frequently (33 per cent), however, a more precise semantic equivalent is preferred – *exercitus paganorum* 'pagan army', and *pagani* renders *se here* in 23 per cent of instances. With these initial observations in mind, I now turn to the discourse analysis of these labels and their contexts.

4.1.2 Discussion of labels and other strategies

As has been observed, the two early sources are not markedly concerned with the ethnicity of the raiders. The *ASC* MS A is altogether silent about the origins of the 'band'; its version of the first Viking landing of 789 (the annal for 787) does not contain the details known from other copies of the *ASC*:

(4) & on his dagum cuomon ærest .iii. scipu, & þa se gerefa þærto rad & hie wolde drifan to þæs cyninges tune þy he nyste hwæt hie wæron, & hiene mon ofslog. Þæt wæron þa ærestan scipu deniscra monna þe Angelcynnes lond sohton. (ChronA 787)

> 'And in his days there came for the first time three ships, and then the reeve rode to them and wished to force them to the king's residence, for he did not know what they were; and they slew him. Those were the first ships of Danish men that came to the land of the English.'

It is only in the later versions that we find *.iii. scipu Norðmanna* (B, C) or *.iii. scypu Norðmanna of Hæreðalande* (D, E, F) 'three ships of Northmen from Hörthaland', that is from western Norway.[13] On two occasions Asser mentions that the fleet came from beyond the sea: *de mari adveniens* (ch. 18 [860]), *de ultramarinis partibus* (ch. 40 [871]), and in chapter 21 he claims that:

(5) Et eodem anno magna paganorum classis **de Danubia** Britanniam advenit (*Life* 21 [866])
'And in the same year, a great pagan fleet came to Britain from Danubia.'

Danubia has no parallel in the Old English text, and, if the reading is original to Asser, it may have arisen due to confusion with the Rhine (*Hrenus* in Asser and *Rhēnus* in classical sources), whose mouth the Danes had controlled before they launched their 866 attack on England, which Stevenson, however, finds "improbable" (1959: 217). Alternatively, *Danubia* – feminine here, unlike the masculine of the classical *Dānuvius* 'the Danube' – may refer to Denmark through erroneous etymological connection between the Danes and the Danube (or 'the country of the Danube' > Danubia 'Denmark' (cf. Plummer 1902: 41; Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 238, n. 44).

Whatever the case may be, the paucity of any relevant information about the ethnicity and/or origins of the outgroup suggests that these characteristics were

13 On the basis of textual evidence from Latin chronicles of the period, Bately concludes that this detail is "non-original" (1986: cvi). MS F shares the addition of *Norðmanna of Hereðalande* with the two Abingdon Chronicles (MSS B and C) and with those derived from a Northern version of the *ASC* (MSS D and E). Since MS B is the earliest among them – late tenth century (Taylor 1983: xi) – and MS A does not contain this information, the addition must date back to no later than MS B itself. This addition, which is probably 200 years later than the first raid, tells us that the Vikings of 787 were Norwegians from Hörthaland (western Norway; cf. Richards 2000: 14–15). Although *Norðmanna of Hereðalande* seems to be a very specific reference, in the second sentence it is replaced by *Deniscra manna* and translated with *de Danis* in the Latin version of the annal in MS F. Thus this context seems to suggest that 'Northmen' and 'Danes' could be used interchangeably, and that the term 'Danes' could include 'Northmen' and refer generically to 'Scandinavians' (cf. DOE s.v. *denisc*; OED s.v. *Dane* 1; cf. Swanton 1996: 54, fn. 4). See also footnote 7 above.

not of primary concern for these early historians.[14] David Dumville (2008: 352) has argued that "it would have been difficult for a chronicler to articulate a national position in the absence of a political nation," which develops only in the tenth century (see Phase 2 below), although "the creation of a single English polity may have been a West-Saxon project for at least a half-century before 927". An ethnic sentiment was certainly roused by the Viking threat, which pushed England towards political unification through the re-conquest of the tenth century (Lavezzo 2006: 8–9). Dumville observes that the Viking Age triggered chronicling and shaped its language (2008: 351), producing, I would add, a defensive response (both political and conceptual) among the Anglo-Saxons (Timofeeva forthcoming; cf. Smith 1986: 55), who suddenly had to review and confabulate their entire history in order to be able to address the issue of their place and legitimacy in Britain and vis-à-vis the newcomers. Thus their real concern in the *ASC* was the political threat and instability caused by the Vikings raids, which, first of all, is emphasized by the amount of space that is devoted to them in both the *ASC* and Asser's *Life*, the former, in particular, dealing almost exclusively with Anglo-Danish wars and defining them as aggression, invasion, killings, looting and so on. But all these are only too obvious and probably universal for communities experiencing a threat of military invasion. The peculiarity of the Anglo-Saxon situation is that being themselves invaders in Britain, they have to come up with a rhetoric that would render any further invaders illegitimate.[15] At the level of labelling, this is achieved through the prevalent use of *here* in the *ASC* and *pagani* in Asser's *Life* (Timofeeva forthcoming).

It has frequently been observed that the *ASC* refers to English military units as *fyrd* 'army, force' while to Danish ones as *here* 'army, band' (Swanton 1996: xxxiii–xxxiv; Dumville 2008: 355). This distinction is maintained consistently,

14 I have argued elsewhere that the significance of the 787 entry lies not so much in its historical accuracy, but rather in the emphasis that it places on the first 'crime' of the outgroup; the first encounter in a way predetermines the events that the chroniclers are living through in Phase 1 (Timofeeva forthcoming).

15 Cf. Fabienne Michelet's account of the *adventus Saxonum* in Gildas, Bede, the *ASC*, and the *Old English Orosius*, which emphasizes several strategies employed by the Anglo-Saxon authors to make their conquest and settlement legitimate at the expense of the previous inhabitants: they stress the Roman connection, by having their own people 'inherit' both land (Britain) and religion (through St. Augustine's mission) from their great predecessors; they exploit the idea of chosenness, by construing Britain as the Promised Land and the Anglo-Saxons as a chosen people of the Christian Church; they also use genealogies and placenames to secure their claims to the land; finally, they exaggerate their own military valour and depict the Celts as cowards and unworthy of their homeland and religion (Michelet 2006: ch. 7).

with the exception of those cases in which *here* is part of a compound, as in *sciphere* 'ship-band, fleet' or *rǣdehere* 'mounted-band, cavalry' (BT, s.v. *here*; Sawyer 1971: 123). In situations when a *here* is fighting a *fyrd*, or the other way around, with, as the story typically goes, heavy slaughter on both sides, one would assume that the units are roughly comparable in terms of size, weapons, and ferocity. Hence the difference in terms must lie elsewhere. Modern translations are not necessarily helpful here, as both *fyrd* and *here* are often rendered as 'army, force, host' (cf. Sawyer ibid.). As far as derivation and compounding go, *here* is a base for, e. g. *hergian* 'to harry, plunder', *hergung*, *hergaþ* 'harrying, devastation', *herehȳþ*, *hererēaf* 'spoil, plunder, booty', and *hererǣs* 'raid'. Other pragmatic connotations of *here* become evident in legal contexts. In the late seventh-century *Laws of Ine* (13–15), *here* is defined as a body of robbers, consisting of over thirty-five people, while participation in *here* is punishable as one of the most serious offenses – the individual has to redeem himself with his wergild. As I have recently argued (Timofeeva forthcoming), this early law code has such a strong association with Alfredian legal and historical texts (cf. Bately 1986: xiii–xiv, xvii–xix, xxxiv; Richards 2014: 284, 291) as to suggest that criminal connotations were still attached to *here* in the late ninth century and were even ideologically exploited by the Alredian community of practice. The juxtaposition of *fyrd* and *here* appears to be a conscious discourse strategy that emphasises the key ideological differences between the two armies, of which only the former is legitimate, while the latter is aggressive, criminal, and, obviously, absolutely unwelcome. Criminalisation of the outgroup has remained a potent discourse strategy to this day (cf. van Dijk et al. [see Dijk et al.] 1997: 168), its message implying, 'We live by the law and justice, while they live by crime and injustice,' which typically combines self-glorification of the dominant ingroup and derogation of the outgroup. One more aspect of the alleged sub-human nature of the outgroup is displayed in the following annal:

(6) þa wæron hie mid metelieste gewægde, & hæfdon miclne dæl þara horsa **freten**. & þa oþre wæron hungre acwolen. (ChronA 893)
'then they [the Danes] were afflicted by want of food, and they had devoured the greater part of their horses; and the rest had been killed by hunger'

According to the DOE, the verb *fretan* 'devour, eat voraciously, consume' is seldom used literally to describe human activity, unless it is applied to cannibals like Grendel, but rather for animals, typically beasts and birds of prey, to which the beset Danes are indirectly compared here. Moreover, in the pre-Christian Germanic world, the eating of horse-meat played an important role in rituals,

which is amply attested by a variety of Old Norse and Anglo-Saxon sources. After conversion, such practices were naturally condemned as pagan (Page 1985: 12–19; Clunies Ross 2014: 63–67). Thus, not only is the outgroup reduced to eating their own horses like wild beasts, but by doing so they also break a Christian taboo. As R.I. Page has argued, the choice of the verb *fretan* conditions the audience's response to the events of the 893 annal. The chronicler "is expressing an attitude, defining the religious and moral gap between Anglo-Saxon and Viking" (Page 1985: 19). It is probably no coincidence that, as soon as the Danes attempt to exit the besieged fortress, they are defeated, and defeated by the 'Christian' force, *þa cristnan hæfdon sige*, an ingroup label that is recorded only two times in the whole of the Parker Chronicle (cf. Kirner-Ludwig 2015: 322).

Less secularly-oriented writers emphasize cultural differences in more straightforward ways. We have seen how in Asser *pagani* and *paganorum exercitus* becomes the most frequent strategy (74 per cent of all references) to mark the outgroup, again placing them outside the world where Christian norms and values apply. In his narrative, the pagans are often confronted by the Christians, which is emphasised by the label *Christiani* applied to the West Saxons (see above) and Asser's attribution of English victories to divine help:

(7) pagani **divino iudicio** Christianorum impetum diutius non ferentes… opprobriosam fugam cepere (ch. 39 [871])
'the pagans, by the divine judgment, not [being able] to bear the attack of the Christians any longer… took to a shameful flight'

The same idea can be phrased differently: *Christiani… divinitus instigati* 'the Christians divinely incited' (ch. 54 [878]), *divino nutu* 'with divine assent' (ch. 56 [878, of the battle of Edington]), etc.

As before, the ingroup is always right, regardless of the nature of the action it engages in. For example, in 885 King Alfred has to fight an unexpected naval battle with the Vikings, as he himself embarks upon a plundering expedition to East Anglia:

(8) Ælfred, Angulsaxonum rex, classem suam de Cantia, plenam bellatoribus, in Orientales Anglos dirigens, **praedandi causa**, transmisit. (ch. 67 [885])[16]
'Alfred, king of the Anglo-Saxons, steering his fleet, full of warriors, out of Kent to the country of the East Angles, led [it] to plunder'

16 This expands a much shorter version of the *ASC*: *sende Aelfred cyning sciphere on Eastengle*. (ChronA 885) 'King Alfred sent a ship-band to East Anglia'.

The plundering expedition of the ingroup, however, does not have to be denounced or even justified, as 'our' goals cannot be wrong or wicked, unlike those of the adversary:

(9) hostiles inter se acies… **illi** perperam agentes, **isti** pro vita et dilectis atque patria pugnaturi, hostiliter convenient. (ch. 39 [871])
'the opposing armies came together in a hostile manner… those to pursue their wicked [course], these to fight for their lives, their loved ones, and their native land.'

The choice of the demonstratives here – *illi* 'those over there' and *isti* 'those near you' – emphasise the ideological distance between the two armies.

The ingroup has values and ideals, whereas the heathen outgroup is guided by avarice alone, behaving like foul beasts that are greedy and treacherous: *lupino more* 'like wolves' (ch. 36 [871]), *vulpino more* 'like foxes' (ch. 20 [865]). The latter characteristic – treacherousness – is emphasized on several other occasions: *peraudacitatem persequentium decipientes* (ch. 42 [871]) 'deceiving the over-audaciousness of their pursuers', *more suo, solita fallacia utens et obsides et iuramentum atque fidem promissam non custodiens… foedere disrupto* (ch. 49 [876]) 'as was their [the band's] custom, using [their] usual treachery and caring neither for the hostages and the oath, nor for the promised loyalty… they broke the treaty', etc. (cf. Page 1987: 9–10).

On the whole, both texts produced by the Alfredian CoP display similar strategies. Outlawing the adversary on legal and religious grounds, their authors create discourses in which the basic social-identity principle – 'our group is good and right, and their group is bad and wrong' – can be reformulated as 'our group is good and right because we have a fair law and follow Christianity, and their group is bad and wrong, because they have no law and follow paganism'. Characteristically, both authors, writing at a time when Danish settlements were still a very recent feature, are vague about the ethnicity and origins of the Vikings. When having Danish neighbours became more of a reality in the tenth century, discourse conventions of chroniclers began to change.

4.2 Phase 2

4.2.1 The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* MS A

In the later part of the *ASC* MS A, this change in discourse is seen at the level of labelling (Table 4).

Table 4: Labelling the Vikings in *ASC* MS A (Phase 2)[b].

	N	%
se here	22	49
þa Deniscan/Denisc here	14	31
sciphere/'fleet'	2	4
'pirates, plunderers'	2	4
Norþmen	1	2
other	4	9
Total	45	100

[b]The counts in this table do not include data from the *Battle of Brunanburh* and the *Capture of Five Boroughs*, as ethnic labels in heroic poetry deserve a special study.

Starting with the annals for the 930s, version A gradually becomes increasingly fragmentary, but its coverage of Phase 2 is sufficient to observe emerging changes.[17] We can see that *se here* is still the dominant strategy,[18] which on the one hand reflects political reality – Danish war-bands were not dissolved at once after the signing of the treaty of Wedmore, but in fact often focused on more eastern destinations in Britain. On the other hand, even though the treaty did acknowledge or give a new status to the Vikings, the discourse conventions of the CoPs were not to change overnight. Nevertheless, there is a double increase in the relative frequencies of the label 'Danish' from 15 to 31 per cent, this group being further distinguished from the *Norþmen* on one occasion (ChronA 920). The label 'heathen' no longer features in this part of the chronicle (Kirner-Ludwig 2015: 324–325). Since the baptism of Guthrum in 878 and the gradual conversion of other Vikings, it was probably no longer considered appropriate. Moreover, the chroniclers have to acknowledge that there are now lands under Danish rule, *under Dena onwalde* (ChronA 900), and that there are Danish bands permanently settled in parts of England: *þone here on Norðhymbrum* 'the war-band in Northumbria' (ChronA 900 and 910), *þone here on Eastenglum* 'the war-band in East Anglia' (ChronA 904 and 917). Most importantly, as West Saxon dominions expand to the east and north, their kings acquire Danish soldiers and Danish subjects:

17 There are only three references to Danes for Phase 3 between 1001 and 1042: one to *sciphere* and two to *þa Deniscan*.

18 The decrease in the frequency of *se here* label is statistically significant (LL 6.18, $p < 0.05$).

(10) Þa for he þonan to Snotingaham & gefor þa burg & het hie gebetan & gesettan ægþer ge mid engliscum mannum **ge mid deniscum**, & him cierde eall þæt folc to þe on Mercna lande geseten wæs, ægþer **ge denisc** ge englisc. (ChronA 918)
'Then he [Edward the Elder] went thence to Nottingham, and occupied the fortification and ordered it to be repaired and manned both with the English and with the Danish. And all the population, that was settled in Mercia, turned to him, both Danish and English.'

Once the loyalties are established, the chroniclers are content to use the term *Denisc*. In fact, starting with the annal for 918, *here* disappears from the record, but this is also one of the last detailed entries in MS A, after which it becomes patchy, with annals from 973 on being written by eleventh- and early twelfth-century hands (Bately 1986: xxxvii–xlii). MS B, produced in the second half of the tenth century, extends to the year 977 and would be an ideal source to study the discourse strategies of Phase 2, had its annals for this period (up to 915) not been copied from a similar exemplar to that of MS A (Taylor 1983: xxviii–l). As is well known, the historical value of MS B lies in the incorporation of entries from the so-called *Mercian Register* (Taylor 1983: xliv–xlvii). These cover the events between 902 and 924 and contain only three direct references to the Vikings. For what it is worth, they include two ethnic labels (one nominalised *þa Deniscan* [ChronB 902] and one, somewhat exceptional, plural *Dene* [ChronB 910]) and one use of *here* (ChronB 918). It would be tempting to conclude that the closer proximity of Danish settlers to the Mercian chroniclers made the latter prefer ethnic terms over those of their West Saxon colleagues, but the data is clearly not substantial enough to support this claim.

4.2.2 Æthelweard's *Chronicle*

Æthelweard stands out as an author in my corpus. Exceptionally for this age, he is a lay Latin writer with, probably, no formal monastic-school education (Lutz 2000: 178). Like Asser, Æthelweard used a copy of the *ASC* as one of his sources (Campbell 1962: xvii–xxxvii; Lutz 2000: 177). In his chronicle, we find continuities and/or coincidences with the previous tradition (although Asser's text was not known to him [Campbell 1962: xxxiii–xxxiv]), but also interesting idiosyncrasies (Campbell 1962: xlvi–lx), which is reflected in his names for the Vikings (Table 5).

Table 5: Labelling the Vikings in Æthelweard's *Chronicle*.

	N	%
barbari	29	23
(DEM) *exercitus*	21	16
Dani/*exercitus Danorum*	17	13
pagani/*increduli*	15	12
'ships, fleet'	14	11
paganorum/*barbarorum exercitus*	9	7
hostes	7	6
piraticus	3	2
other	13	10
Total	128	100

Some of the terms in Æthelweard's *Chronicle* are clearly consistent with the *ASC* – *Dani* (including 2 instances of *exercitus Danorum*) are used about as frequently as *þa Deniscan* and *pagani* slightly more frequently than *hæþene men* (in Phase 1). Other terms are reminiscent of Asser's usages (DEM) *exercitus*, *paganorum exercitus*, and *hostes*, although the former two occur much less frequently than in the *Life of King Alfred*. What singles Æthelweard out, however, is his frequent use of *barbari* 'barbarians' (26 per cent) as well as a much higher percentage of other idiosyncratic terms that do not fit into any of the categories distinguished so far (some of which are introduced below). The stance that Æthelweard seems to take is that of a cultivated patrician on the edge of the civilised world who is outraged and disgusted by the devastation of his land by hordes of culturally inferior wild peoples.[19] This can be seen not only in his fondness for *barbari* rather than *pagani*, but also in the application of other classical terms to the Viking Age (Winterbottom 1967). For example, Æthelweard is reluctant to call Danish leaders simply *rex*, as this term is likely to equate their status to that of local legitimate English kings; instead, he often marks them negatively as 'tyrants' – *tyranni Inguuares* (iv.2 [866], iv.3 [878]), *tyrannus* (iv.3 [876] and [893]) – or 'pirates' – *Sigeferð piraticus de Northhimbriorum* (iv.3 [893]). He has to acknowledge, though, that English lands have, before his time, been controlled by the Danes:

(11) Guðrum, Borealium rex Anglorum… cuius consessus maxime fuerat inter Orientales Anglos, quoniam ibi et statum tenuerat primum. (iv.3 [890])
'Guthrum, the king of the Northern English… his settlement lay principally among the East Angles, for there he had had the first colony'.

19 Dumville remarks that Æthelweard is "quite vigorously racist" (2008: 355). See also the discussion of Æthelweard's *barbari* in Kirner-Ludwig (2015: 342–343).

This is, however, a grudging acknowledgement,[20] which can occasionally be phrased in less neutral terms. For example, when recording the death of the Viking king of York, he writes, *obiit… Guthfrid, rex Northhymbriorum* 'Guthfrith, king of the Northumbrians died' (iv.3 [895]), and adds a derogatory adjective later on *rex… foetidus* 'foul, stinking; hateful'.[21]

Although it has been shown that Æthelweard had both an interest in, and knowledge of, the Norse language, beliefs, place names, and proper names, including those in royal genealogies (Townend 2002: 110–128; cf. Campbell 1962: lix–lx), the attitude that virtually pervades his writing is that of disgust. It is most apparent in his straightforward application of such terms as 'filthy' (cf. Page 1987: 3): *squalidas turmas* 'filthy troops' (iv.3 [893]), *plebs spurcissima* 'the filthiest people' (iv.3 [878]), *plebs immunda* 'foul people' (iv.3 [885]) but also in his metaphors: *lues inmunda, lues* 'dirty pest, pest' (both in iv.3 [885]).[22] Æthelweard describes Danish invasions as one would plague epidemics or natural disasters: *bella… contra orientalem… cladem* 'the war against the eastern calamity' (iv.4 [902]), *Vastantur… a tempestate prædicta* 'devastated by the aforementioned tempest' (iv.4 [910]). These exaggerations also connect to another typical strategy – the threat of the invasion is so great that it seems as if the enemy came like a storm, their army were immense *sine numero… exercitus* 'a force without number' (iv.3 [871]) and bordering on the supernatural *aut certe explorationis ritu tam celeres aut æterni numinis per arua siluasque feruntur* 'they ranged through fields and woods as swift indeed as scouts or as the eternal spirit' (iv.2 [871], trans. Campbell 1962: 37).

The treacherousness of the Vikings is a topos common to both Æthelweard and Asser (Page 1987: 11–12). Being a *plebs impiisima* 'most impious, disrespectful people' (iv.2 [871]), they have no regard for treaties and promises – *Fraude constituunt iterata pacem barbari mente* 'the barbarians made peace treacherously, being in the same [frame of] mind [as before]' (iv.3 [877]), *barbari pactum rumpunt Eaduuardum regem aduersus* 'the barbarians broke the peace with King Edward' (iv.4 [909]), etc.

Finally, when it comes to cultural differences, Æthelweard is outspoken and inventive. Based on Bede's genealogy of Hengest (Campbell 1962: xx, xxxv), he concludes that Woden was a 'real' king, and that the barbarians in their

20 Campbell's translation of *Borealium rex Anglorum* is 'the king of the Scandinavian English' (1962: 47). I would rather suggest that Æthelweard coins this euphemism to express 'the king of the English of the Danish zone' or, possibly, 'the king of the Northmen and Angles,' with the conjunction *et* or *-que* missing.

21 If Campbell's interpretation of Æthelweard's syntax is correct (1962: 51, n.3).

22 The 'pest' metaphor is not unique to Æthelweard, e.g. Bede uses it in his account of a battle with the Arabs in Gaul, *Sarracenorum lues* (*HE* v.23.4). In Henry of Huntingdon, it becomes very prominent, also as a text-organising element (see below).

savagery worship him as their god. There is one occasion on which he terms this idea explicitly as *Vuoddan regis barbarorum* 'Woden, king of the barbarians' (i.3), and develops it fully in Book I, which deals with the Anglo-Saxon conquest of Britain:

(12) … hoc est Hengest et Horsa filii Vuyhtelsi, auus eorum Vuicta, et proauus eorum Vuithar, atauus quidem eorum Vuothen, qui et rex multitudinis **barbarorum**. In tanta etenim seductione oppressi **aquilonales increduli** ut deum colunt usque in hodiernam diem, viz. **Dani**, **Northmanni** quoque, et **Sueui**. (i.4)
'that is Hengest and Horsa, the sons of Wihtels; their grandfather was Wihta, their great-grandfather Withar, and their great-great-grandfather Woden, who was king of a multitude of the **barbarians**. **The heathen northern peoples** are overwhelmed in so great a seduction that they worship [him] as a god to the present day, that is to say the **Danes**, **Norwegians** and also the **Svebi** [i. e., most probably Swedes]' (trans. Campbell 1962: 9; emphasis added)

The same idea is repeated almost verbatim later on *Wothen, qui et rex multarum gentium, quem pagani nunc ut deum colunt aliqui* 'Woden, who [was] king of many peoples, whom some pagans worship as god today' (ii.2). Æthelweard's insistence on the inappropriateness of this practice seems to be grounded not so much in his religious feeling – for, unlike Asser, he never terms the confrontation between the English and Danes as that between Christians and pagans – but rather in cultural prejudice against peoples that he perceives to be backward in their customs, inferior in their degree of civilisation. This attitude, I would argue, is not surprising for a lay author belonging to the West Saxon ruling clan, most of whose life and career coincide with the period of English military success and political control. By using dissimilation strategies and articulating the cultural inferiority of the outgroup, Æthelweard argues for the legitimacy of his group's dominance. His position can be epitomised by the following statement, which concludes his account of the battle of Brunanburh:

(13) uno solidantur Brittannidis arua, undique pax, omniumque foecundia rerum, nec usque ad istas motus adhæsit sine littora Anglorum foedere classicus. (iv.5 [937])
'The fields of Britain were consolidated into one, there was peace everywhere, and abundance of all things, and [since then] no fleet has remained here, having advanced against these shores, except under treaty with the English.' (trans. Cambell 1962: 54)

The victory of the ingroup brings political peace and economic stability, symbolically re-establishing the *status quo ante*, when Britain prospered and was unaware of the Viking fleets (cf. Page 1987: 13–14). At this point, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* breaks into a panegyric poem celebrating the victory of King Æthelstan. Although I cannot elaborate on the rhetoric of the chronicle poems here,[23] I think it is meaningful that both the *Battle of Brunanburh* (937) and the *Capture of Five Boroughs* (942) appear in what I have defined as Phase 2 of historical writing about the Vikings. Never before had the chroniclers been able to indulge in self-glorification so outspokenly as in this period. With the political victories of the 930-50s, the national body was restored and extended to the north, so that the strategies of justification could now appeal to the pre-Viking past and claim West Saxon expansion to be a return of the good old times:

(14) Ne wearð wæl mare
on þis eiglande æfre gieta
folces gefylled beforan þissum
sweordes ecgum, þæs þe us secgað bec,
ealde uðwitan, siþþan eastan hider
Engle and Seaxe up becoman,
ofer brad brimu Brytene sohtan,
wlance wigsmiþas, Wealas ofercoman,
eorlas arhwate eard begeatan. (ASMP: 20, ll.65b-73)
'Never, before this,/were more men in this island slain/by the sword's edge – as books and aged sages/confirm – since Angles and Saxons sailed here/from the east, sought the Britons over the wide seas,/since those warsmiths hammered the Welsh,/and earls, eager for glory, overran the land. (trans. Crossley-Holland 2002: 19)

As the irony of history would have it, Æthelweard lived long enough to see the fortunes of the English and Danish reverse again in the 980-90s, which will concern us in the following section. Let me conclude here by noting that, despite the stylistic differences between the *ASC* and Æthelweard's chronicle, they do share a change of perspective. The increase in the use of ethnic labels in the *ASC* is paralleled by the amount of ethnographic and linguistic detail we find in Æthelweard (cf. Townend 2002: 110–128). This can only be explained by the change in historical circumstance and the proximity of Scandinavian

23 Restricted by genre considerations, I excluded the poems from my analysis.

neighbours, who cannot only be demonised as arch-criminals but also observed in their 'normal' routines, if only to condemn these routines as barbaric. Æthelweard's individual strategies, however, are markedly different from those of his sources. These idiosyncrasies are arguably due to his external position vis-à-vis the CoP of the royal household, with which he might share the ideology but not the lexical choices to express this ideology in.

4.3 Phase 3

As Viking attacks increase again in the late tenth century, the labelling approaches the situation of Phase 1, with *se here* returning to over sixty per cent and ethnic labels dropping to 12 per cent (Table 6). *Normen*/*Norwegan* can be largely disregarded here, for these occur only in the annal for 1066 and refer to men associated with Harald of Norway in the battle of Stamford Bridge. Moreover, a twelfth-century scribe is responsible for the last few lines of this entry (Swanton 1996: 198; O'Brien O'Keeffe 2001: xxxvi). However, the 'Danes' and 'Norwegians' of Phase 3 become identifiable both geographically and politically. These are no longer generic terms that refer to all Scandinavians, just as their countries of origin, *Denemearce* and *Norwege*, enter the *ASC* for the first time at this stage and bear precise connections to the respective Scandinavian kingdoms (Dumville 2008: 357).

Table 6: Labelling the Vikings in *ASC* MS C.

	N	%
se here	61	64
'fleet/ships'	16	17
þa Deniscan/*Denan*	7	7
Normen/*Norwegan*	5	5
fiend	4	4
fyrd	2	2
wicingas	1	1
Total	96	100

The second most frequent labelling strategy, however, is 'fleet/ships' (*sciphere*, *scipu*, *flota*). Unlike the mostly anonymous armies and fleets of Phase 1, those of Phase 3 are often associated with particular leaders: with Anlaf and Sweyn (994), Sweyn (1003, 1004, 1009, several times in 1013 and 1014), Cnut (several times in 1014 and 1016), Harald of Norway (1066). Significantly, *here* seems to

be less unequivocal than it was previously: on the one hand, it can refer to the Anglo-Saxons raiding Scotland and Wales (1054 and 1056, see Swanton 1996: xxxiv), and vice versa *fyrd* can refer to the Vikings (two times in 1013); on the other hand, eleventh-century scribes come up with the neologism *unfriþhere* 'hostile band' (employed two times in MSS D and E, annals 1007 and 1009, but only once in MS C, annal 1009), which would be a tautology by Alfredian standards, but apparently not so for annalists working outside this community of practice both temporally and spatially, C, D and E being copied either within or close to the Mercian dialect's sphere of influence.

Similarly, a source that is common to C, D and E introduced a new convention in early eleventh-century annals: whatever atrocities the Vikings commit – plundering, burning or killing – they are accompanied by a set-phrase *swa hiora gewuna is* 'as is their custom' (ChronC 1009) or *ealswa hi ær gewuna wæron* 'as they were earlier accustomed (to do)' (ChronC 1006). The phrase is rather common in Old English – a proximity search for the collocation of *swa* + *gewuna* in the DOEC returns about a hundred hits in both early and late OE; it is noteworthy, however, that it surfaces in the annals from 1006 to 1016, when the raids are particularly frequent, but in a way fail to impress the chroniclers, as if they do not expect anything else from the Vikings (cf. Kirner-Ludwig 2015: 328–329). This formulaic coverage of events, no doubt, shapes and triggers a formulaic response in the audience; in the same way as formulaic news coverage today shapes our ideas about crimes and their perpetrators (van Dijk et al. [see Dijk et al.] 1997: 173–175; van Dijk [see Dijk] 2008: 54–61). Significantly, the use of *swa gewuna* discontinues after 1016, when Cnut becomes king of England and sends most of his troops home.[24]

MS E shares most of the features discussed thus far, while the extent of detail on the reign of Cnut and his two sons differs only slightly between C and E (Irvine 2004: lxiv–lxxxiv), with E being more precise with ethnic terms on two occasions: when describing Cnut's losses in a battle with the Swedes as *ægðer ge deniscra manna ge engliscra* 'both of Danish men and of English' (ChronE 1025) and when reporting Harthacnut's succession as that supported *ge fram Anglum ge fram Denum* 'both by the English and the Danes' (ChronE 1039).

24 Even though it has been suggested that the annals for 983–1016 may "represent a deliberate recasting in *c*. 1022, perhaps by a priest now in Cnut's service", whose unfavourable judgement of King Æthelred the Unready was politically motivated (see Brooks 2010: 51–52 and references therein), I still find the general attitude of the annals stereotypically hostile to the Vikings. If, indeed, some censorship took place, it was probably concerned with the main political players rather than with the ethnic groups they belonged to.

With the 1040s, 50s and 60s (up to 1066 and its major battles) being rather uneventful in terms of Viking raids, the analysis of Phase 3 has to stop here. What it brings to light though is that just as the Viking activities in Phases 1 and 3 are on the aggressive side, so do the discourse practices concentrate on the militant aspect of their otherness. Phase 3 reverts to the old dichotomy of *here* and *fyrd*, even though its chroniclers are not always capable of maintaining the conceptual divide between the two terms. However, the strategy of referring to the outgroup by military units – whether old as *here* or innovative as *flota* or *unfriþhere* – rather than ethnicity is essentially the same as in Phase 1. Routinisation of discourse and stereotypisation of the outgroup are clearly more pronounced in Phases 1 and 3. Let us consider whether the same will hold true for historians writing outside the Viking Age.

4.4 Post-Conquest phase

4.4.1 John of Worcester's *Chronicle*

Because post-Conquest chronicles are compilations and translations of earlier sources (see dating in Section 3), they share many features of the texts discussed above. An interesting dependency can be observed in John of Worcester's *Chronicle*: for his events between 789 and 851, he relies on a version of the *ASC* (Darlington and McGurk 1995: xix), while after 851 he switches to Asser's *Life* as his main source, as this is exactly the date at which the *Life* starts. Consequently, his most original lexis is to be found in the pre-851 descriptions of the Vikings, while for the rest of the events between 851 and 887 the statistics for Asser and John essentially overlap (see Table 7).

Table 7: Labelling the Vikings in John of Worcester's *Chronicle*.

	N	%
pagani	65	47
exercitus paganorum	31	22
(DEM) *exercitus*	16	12
Dani	11	8
hostes	8	6
other	6	4
piratae	2	1
Total	139	100

Similarly, John uses the term *Dani* only in the former (pre-851) part when he has only the Old English source to rely on, switching to *pagani* and following Asser in the latter. The new term that he introduces to render the earlier annals is *piratae* 'pirates', which he uses two times in the genitive plural in combination with 'ships': *xxxv nauibus piratarum* (JW 833 and 837) to render Old English *sciphlæst* 'ship-freight; transport (of warriors)', and two more times in the nominative plural in combination with 'Danish' – *Danici pirate* (subsumed in the statistics for *Dani*). The first instance corresponds to *iii scipu* of the *ASC* (ChronA 787), and the second one to *hæþne men* (ChronA 832), both being rather free renderings unless, of course, John's version of the *ASC* did contain *Wicingas* or *þa Deniscan* at these points. Importantly in the crucial annal for 787 John adds that the Vikings came *de Dania* 'from Denmark'. Apart from these idiosyncrasies of the earlier part, the rest of the first Viking-age annals are remarkably consistent with Asser's text, including the odd reference to *Danubia* in 866.

4.4.2 Symeon of Durham's *Historia Regum*

Although the nomenclature of terms employed by Symeon of Durham is not inventive, relying heavily on both Asser and John of Worcester, their distributions are much more even, with *pagani* in the lead and *Dani* being almost as frequent, often replacing the *pagani* of his sources (Table 8). Although phrases with *exercitus* for *here* constitute some 30 per cent of the labels, they are still in the minority, often replaced with *pagani*, *Dani*, or *hostes* in translation. As discussed above, Latin *exercitus* is semantically neutral, and the abundance of other labels would suggest that *here*, too, has become rather neutral for Symeon.

Table 8: Labelling the Vikings in Symeon of Durham's *Historia Regum*.

	N	%
pagani	23	22
Dani	22	21
hostes/*inimici*	18	17
(DEM) *exercitus*	17	16
exercitus paganorum	16	15
other	11	10
Total	107	100

The 'other' category is also significant. Although Symeon seldom sticks to the same labelling or description strategy, his choice of lexis contributes nicely to the topoi addressed earlier in this paper. For example, in the account of the raid on Lindisfarne, the Vikings' origin is explained as *ab aquilonali climate* 'from the northerly region' (HR § 56 [793]). To the events of the 860s and 870s he adds the following epithets: *hospites insidiosi* 'treacherous visitors' (HR § 70 [868]), *perversi raptores* 'perverse plunderers' (§ 73 [871]), *populum bellicantem* 'warlike people' (§ 73 [871]), and *lupi feroces* 'ferocious wolves' (§ 76[878]). The Vikings are referred to very concretely as *inimici Anglorum* 'enemies of the English' (§ 73 [871]), ranked in the *hostes*/*inimici* category. Symeon is also the only author alongside Æthelweard to use *barbari* in his text: *multitudinem barbarorum* 'the multitude of barbarians' (§ 73 [871] and cf. § 75 [875], both seemingly independent of Æthelweard's *Chronicon*.

4.4.3 Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum*

Henry of Huntingdon stands out among the Latin-writing authors discussed so far in that he has an articulate historiographical agenda. Writing his *Historia Anglorum* on commission from Bishop Alexander 'the Magnificent' of Lincoln in the genre of *origines gentium*, he organises his (meta)narrative around the master idea, going as far back as Gildas, Bede and Alcuin, if not further, that sinful peoples and rulers are always punished by God. These punishments or 'plagues', as Henry calls them, come upon the peoples of Britain as five invasions – by the Romans, the Picts and Scots, the Angles and Saxons, the Danes, and the Normans (Greenway 1996: lvii–lix), the whole *historia Anglorum* being seen as a divine plan that culminates in Henry's own times with the accession of Henry Plantagenet in 1154. Within this plan, the last two invasions – by the Danes and the Normans – are presented as the punishment for the sins of the Anglo-Saxons, e. g.:

(15) Sicut autem in regalibus gestis impietas eorum descripta est, ita uniuscuiusque ordinis et officii homines dolo et prodicione insistebant.... Inmisit ergo Dominus omnipotens, uelut examina apium, gentes crudelissimas, que nec etati nec sexui parcerent, scilicet Dacos cum Gothis, Norwagenses cum Suathedis, Wandalos cum Fresis, qui ab exordio regni Ædelwlfi regis usque ad aduentum Normannorum Willelmi regis, ductu ducentis triginta annis, terram hanc desolauerunt. (v.pref.)
'Just as their wickedness was represented in the deeds of the kings, so also men of every rank and office devoted themselves to evil and treachery.... Therefore Almighty God sent down upon them the most cruel of peoples,

> like swarms of bees, who would spare neither age nor sex; these were the Danes and Goths, the Norwegians and Swedes, the Vandals and Frisians, who desolated this land for 230 years, from the beginning of the reign of King Æthelwulf to the coming of the Normans under the leadership of King William.' (trans. Greenway 1996: 275)[25]

Along with the Scandinavians, we find Goths, Vandals and even Frisians,[26] peoples with a reputation for cruelty and destruction, being anachronistically inserted into the ninth century and taking part in the invasions.

Two books of the *Historia Anglorum* – V and VI ("De bellis Dacorum" ['On the Danish wars'] and "De adventu Normannorum" ['On the coming of the Normans']) – are dedicated almost exclusively to the historical events of the Viking Age. Unlike the other Latin historians, Henry relies more on the English text of the *ASC* than the available Latin chronicles,[27] which, in the episodes that he translates rather than paraphrases, has implications for Henry's lexical choices.

With ethnic terms, Henry prefers *Daci* (more than half of the instances; see example above and Table 9.) rather than *Dani*, following an established fashion to etymologise and relate contemporary peoples to their supposedly classical precursors (Bremmer 1984). The combined count for (DEM) *exercitus* and *exercitus paganorum* is 31 per cent. As with other Latin authors, this use is mostly conditioned by *se here* in the English source, with *exercitus paganorum* being limited to the portions based on Asser via later writers. Henry's use of *pagani*, on the other hand, is remarkably low and still lower again in the chapters that chronologically follow Asser's *Life* (only 3 instances). Among the Latin writers, Henry is the only one to adopt *Wicingi*[28] from his English source and the first to dwell on the terminological distinction between the 'old' and 'new' *Normanni*. On the one hand, he acknowledges that in his sources *Normanni* may refer to 'Norsemen, Norwegians':

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25 Here and below the translations are from Greenway's 1996 edition. "The theme [of five plagues] is first announced in i.4, and recapitulated in the preface to v; it is developed in i.47, ii.17, 35, iv.25, 30, v preface, vi.3" (Greenway 1996: lix, n. 13).

26 From at least the eleventh century onward, Frisians are associated with piracy and ferocity in the sources (Bremmer 1984: 359).

27 According to Greenway (1996: lxxxv), "about 25 % of the [entire] History came from Bede, around 40 % derived from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, and about another 10 % came from other written sources".

28 So far as I am aware, Henry is the only author to use this term in the twelfth century (cf. English and Latin data in Kirner-Ludwig 2015: 252–253).

Table 9: Labelling the Vikings in Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum*.

	N	%
Daci	144	51
(DEM) *exercitus*	78	28
'fleet'	15	5
pagani	11	4
exercitus paganorum	7	3
hostes	6	2
Norwagenses	4	1
Wicingi	3	1
other	13	5
Total	281	100

(16) **Dacos**...qui etiam **Normanni**[29] eo tempore sunt uocati (v.20 [942])
'the Danes, who at that time were also called "Norsemen"'

On the other hand, as the distinction becomes particularly important in his account of the events of 1066, when both the Norwegian army of King Harald and the Norman army of Duke William are present in England at the same time, Henry uses *Norwagenses* 'Norwegians' as opposed to *Normanni* 'Normans' to maintain the difference. For example, the battle of Stamford Bridge on 25 September ends disastrously for the Norwegians and their supporters:

(17) Angli Haraldum regem et Tosti ceciderunt, et totam **Norwagensium**[30] aciem uel armis strauerunt, uel igne deprehensos combusserunt (vi.27 [1066])
'the English killed King Harald and Tosti, and laid low the whole Norwegian line, either with their arms or by consuming with fire those they intercepted'

The doom of destruction, however, can be averted no further, and the Normans come to complete what the Danes and Norwegians have started. This

29 Before 1066, *Normanni* is used only once (passages from the Chronicle poems excluded as before), in this particular paragraph.
30 There are two more mentions of *Norwagenses* within this chapter (vi.27).

justification of conquest is phrased emphatically in William the Conqueror's speech before Hastings:[31]

(18) aliquis Anglorum quos centies antecessores nostri **Daci** et **Norwagenses** bellis uicerunt (vi.29 [1066])
'any of the Englishmen whom our Danish and Norwegian ancestors have conquered in a hundred battles'

In his preface, Henry compares the Danes to 'swarms of bees' *uelut examina apium* (v.pref.) and *plagam horribilem* 'horrible plague' (ibid.). This re-introduces the old theme that depicts the invaders as a natural disaster: *exercitus… maximus, quasi fluuius inundans et omnia secum uoluens* 'an immense army flooding in like a river and carrying all before it' (v.6 [871]), *quasi locuste* 'like locusts' (v.8 [878]), *quasi multitudo locustarum* (vi.2 [1003]) 'like a swarm of locusts', *operuerunt Angliam quasi nubes celi* (v.28 [988]) 'they covered England like the clouds of the sky', etc.. They are ubiquitous and unavoidable like the wrath of God: *Dei uindices et stimuli* 'God's avengers and goads' (v.pref.).

The cruelty and belligerence of the Danes is emphasized on many occasions: *Daci… cum ferro et flamma* (v.30 [997]) 'the Danes with fire and sword', *Waringscyre ferro et flamma destruxerunt* (vi.11 [1016]) 'they destroyed Warwickshire by fire and sword', *Daci… semper et soli bello intenti* (v.30 [999]) 'the Danes always and exclusively intent on warfare', *Daci… semper bellis exercitati* (v.30 [1001]) 'the Danes always trained in warfare', exaggerated to biblical proportions, as if in the Massacre of the Innocents: *puerosque iactantes super acumina lancearum recipiebant* (vi.6 [1010]) 'and took away children, tossing them on the points of their lances'.

Even though God's plan has been to destroy the English, Henry does not take the Danish side too openly (unless in the fictional speech of William the Conqueror in vi.29, quoted above); rather, he couches his words in such a way as to make Danish audacity and valour and divine providence the product of one will. For example, Swein's conquest is made legitimate almost ten years before its completion:

(19) Suein uir fortissimus, **cui Deus regnum Anglie destinauerat**, cum nauibus multis uenit (vi.3 [1004])
'Swein, a very powerful man, for whom God had destined the kingdom of England, came with many ships'

31 The speech was added by Henry into his third version of the *Historia* in or after 1140. It may derive from a French source, a story or poem (Greenway 1996: lxx, lxxxi, cvii).

Both Swein and later his son Cnut are referred to as *rex Anglorum* in the *Historia* (vi.10 [1014] and vi.14 [1017] respectively), the *ASC* using just *cyning* on these occasions. Moreover, the reign of King Cnut is glorified as a period of political stability and Christian virtue:

(20) Nec enim ante eum tante magnitudinis rex fuerat in Anglia. Erat namque dominus tocius Dacie, tocius Anglie, tocius Norwagie, simul et Scotie. (vi.17 [1035])
'Before him there had never been in England a king of such great authority. He was lord of all Denmark, of all England, of all Norway, and also of Scotland.'

The eulogy goes on to praise Cnut for his regal humility and pilgrimage to Rome. While Swein and Cnut act as divine avengers at a time when the destruction of the English is nearing its end, Henry's account of the tenth century is more flexible and so is God's will, it seems. In the chapters that belong to the period of West Saxon re-conquest and expansion, divine providence sides with the English:

(21) Tandem suos **diuina pietas** uictoria decorauit, Dacosque infideles cede simul et fuga dehonestauit (v.16 [914])
'In the end the divine compassion honoured His own with victory, and dishonoured the faithless Danes with slaughter and also flight'

This is also a time when the Scandinavians are still, supposedly, heathen. With the destruction of monasteries by Ealdorman Ælfhere and the murder of Edward the Martyr, however, divine support is lost, the fortunes of warfare reversed, and the English cause doomed.

(22) **Inde iterum Dominus ad iram promotus**, quod facere parauerat non distulit. Veneruntque Daci ex multis partibus et operuerunt Angliam quasi nubes celi. (v.28 [988])
'Then the Lord, once more moved to anger, did not delay what He had planned to do. The Danes came from many directions and covered England like the clouds of the sky' (cf. also v.27 [975 and 978])

Henry is particularly outraged by the wicked deeds of Æthelred the Unready, and, after the 1002 massacre of the Scandinavian settlers, his voice becomes increasingly pro-Danish.

(23) omnes Dacos qui cum pace erant in Anglia clandestina prodicione fecit mactari una eademque die (vi.2 [1002])
'he [Æthelred] ordered all the Danes who were living peacefully in England to be put to death on the same day'

A description of the massacre follows, after which

(24) ira Daci exarserunt digna, sicut ignis quem sagimine uelit aliquis extinguere (vi.2 [1003])
'the Danes were inflamed with justifiable anger, like a fire which someone had tried to extinguish with fat'

As the English leaders (ealdormen Ælfric [vi.2] and Eadric [vi.4-5, 10, 13–14], King Æthelred, the Godwins [vi.21-23, 25, 27]) become weaker and more treacherous, the valour and audacity of the Danes increases, rightfully rewarded by the acceptance and glorification of, firstly, King Swein and, later, King Cnut. And finally, as we have seen, an ethnic connection to these great conquests makes the claim of William of Normandy strangely legitimate. Thus, justification strategy becomes dominant in Henry's work. The Scandinavian and Norman conquests are justifiable because they instantiate God's wrath, because they punish the undeserving and sinful English, and because they fulfil the divine plan of historical justice. This straightforward agenda of the *Historia Anglorum* makes Henry distinct from the other Anglo-Latin authors considered here. John of Worcester and Symeon of Durham are more conventional in their discourse practices and treatment of the sources, and, therefore, arguably more deeply rooted in the old communities of practice.

5 Discussion and conclusions

My conclusions fall into several categories. First of all, at the level of chronology, it certainly makes sense to distinguish at least four phases to which Viking-related historical writing can be assigned. This division is supported by both the political developments within Anglo-Saxon history and also by the manuscript history of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, from which most of the sources discussed in this paper ultimately derive. These points in turn connect to the communities of practice associated with chronicle writing of a particular phase with its own political agenda and a set of ethnic attitudes. It has been

shown how the earlier sources of Phase 1 (Alfredian community of practice) are typically vague in their descriptions and definitions of the Vikings, marking them either as people of the alien army or of an alien, non-Christian religion. In doing so, they emphasize the distance between the in- and outgroup (strategies of dissimilation in Wodak et al. 2009's terms) and the illegitimacy and criminality of the Viking outgroup (cf. van Dijk [see Dijk] 1997, 2008). In a phase when the ingroup identity itself is threatened, these strategies can be seen as a defensive ethnic response (cf. Smith 1986: 55) that reasserts the West Saxon bid for power and outlaws menacing competitors. Moving into Phase 2, discourse strategies become less defensive, and the ethnic dimension of the outgroup becomes more prominent, with Viking ways and origins receiving more attention. Now that they are settled and under control, the Vikings are no longer demonised but accepted as part of the peoples of the West Saxon realm, with their subjugated position allowing for condescending and even ridiculing remarks by politically influential writers like Ealdorman Æthelweard. Although the level of detail remains high in Phase 3, discourse strategies have many parallels with Phase 1, just at a time when the situation is again politically unstable and the threat from without greater than in the previous century. Phase 4 represents a new age that attempts to put the old sources to new political use. Its authors display a variety of labelling and other discourse strategies, their choice being determined both by the clichés and stereotypes of the sources but also by their own ambition in creating a new confabulated past for a community that is going through an "extreme political and cultural upheaval", a new conquest and a change of elites (Ashe 2007).

At the level of sustainability of discourse practices, the notion of communities of practice seems to be an adequate framework to describe diachronic changes within a small group of writers who either physically belong to the same cultural circle (such as Winchester) or adhere to the same verbal practices simply because their sources are so limited that they all have to consult them before proceeding with their annals (Timofeeva forthcoming). This applies both to lexical choices like *here* vs. *þa Deniscan* (and the overuse of *exercitus* in the Latin part of my corpus) and to stereotypes about the treacherousness and ferocity of the Vikings, which can be phrased differently but carry the same idea. At the same time, as the more immediate communities of practice disintegrate, their verbal practices cannot be carried on unaltered, so even established strategies like the contrast between *here* and *fyrd* become less precise over time. The framework is also valid at the level of individual authors, for it highlights the differences between those who follow the accepted practices and those who are ambitious enough (and also marginal enough vis-à-vis existing communities of practice) to introduce their own. In my corpus, these

are writers like Æthelweard with his unconventional lay background and Henry of Huntingdon with his unique approach both to his own version of English history and to his sources (Greenway 1996).

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